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ABSTRACT

The joint efforts of twentieth-century public school administrators and private philanthropy in initiating reforms to provide for children with learning disabilities are examined. The development of these reforms is traced from the establishment of special classes for the backward to the creation of programs for the learning disabled. What this history tells about current efforts to provide for at-risk children is discussed with an exploration of the ways in which school administrators have conceptualized childhood learning disabilities and the institutional arrangements they have introduced to accommodate learning-disabled students. Throughout the century, the preference of school administrators has been to accommodate low achievers in segregated classrooms and programs. The experiences of Minneapolis (Minnesota) highlight the progression and demonstrate the problems that remain. Although the label has changed for these children, they are still being separated from the mainstream. (SLD)

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